Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 1, 5, 6 and 7. A first replacement sheet, which includes Fig. 1, replaces the original sheet including Fig. 1 and includes changes therein to more clearly illustrate the light receiving pixels which is formed beneath each group of electrodes 12-1 to 12-3 and between separation regions. A second replacement sheet, which includes Figs. 4 and 5, replaces the original sheet including Figs. 4 and 5 and adds the label "PRIOR ART" to Fig. 5. A third replacement sheet, which includes Fig. 6, replaces the original sheet including Fig. 6 and adds the label "PRIOR ART" to Fig. 6. A fourth replacement sheet, which includes Figs. 7A and 7B, replaces the original sheet including Figs. 7A and 7B and adds the label "PRIOR ART" to each of Figs. 7A and 7B.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-5 are pending in the application. By this amendment, Figs. 1 and 5-7 of the drawings are being amended, as required in the Office Action. No new matter is involved.

In paragraph 1 on page 2 of the Office Action, Figs. 5-7 of the drawings are required to be designated as "PRIOR ART". In response, Applicant is enclosing replacement sheets for each of these figures which include the label "PRIOR ART".

In paragraph 2 and 3 on pages 2, 3 and 4 of the Office Action, the drawings are objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.183(a) for failing to show light receiving pixels as described in the specification and as set forth in the claims. In response, Applicant is submitting a replacement sheet for Fig. 1. Such replacement sheet labels two of the light receiving pixels, and each of which is formed beneath a group of electrodes 12-1 to 12-3 and between separation regions. Each light receiving pixel is formed by the region beneath a group of transfer electrodes 12-1 to 12-3 and between separation regions 56 such as by making the transfer electrodes 12-1 to 12-3 with translucent polysilicon or the like.

In paragraph 5 which begins on page 4 of the Office Action, claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C.§ 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 4,696,021 of Kawahara et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In rejecting claims 1-5 as anticipated by Kawahara et al., the Office Action states that Kawahara et al. has separation regions 6' beneath particular transfer electrodes which are narrower than regions beneath remaining transfer electrodes, with reference being made to Figs. 2A and 2B. However, in Kawahara et al., the separation regions 6' are actually provided beneath all transfer electrodes. This is in contrast to the present invention, as defined in the claims, which structure is

such that the width of the separation region is narrower in a region beneath at least one transfer electrode in each predetermined set of transfer electrodes than in a region beneath the remaining transfer electrodes in the set of transfer electrodes. In this regard, Fig. 1 of the present application shows that with respect to each pair of the transfer electrodes 12-1 to 12-3, only the width of the region beneath the transfer electrode 12-2 is narrower than that of the remaining regions beneath the transfer electrodes 12-1 and 12-3. Kawahara et al. does not disclose or suggest such structure.

In the case of claim 1, such claim defines a solid state imaging device "wherein the width of the separation region is narrower in a region beneath at least one transfer electrode in each predetermined set of transfer electrodes than in a region beneath the remaining transfer electrodes in the set of transfer electrodes". Therefore, claim 1 is submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over Kawahara et al. Similar comments apply to claim 2 which depends from and contains all of the limitations of claim 1.

In the case of claim 3, such claim defines a method of driving a solid state imaging device "the width of the separation region being narrower in a region beneath at least one transfer electrode in each predetermined set of transfer electrodes than in a region beneath the remaining transfer electrodes in the set of transfer electrodes". Therefore, claim 3 is submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over Kawahara et al. Similar comments apply to claims 4 and 5 which depend from and contain all of the limitations of claim 3.

In conclusion, claims 1-5 are submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the prior art for the reasons discussed above. In addition, the drawings have been amended in compliance with the requirements set forth in the Office Action. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

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